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THE BOY CRUSADERS.

THAT spirit of mingled superstition and enthusiasm
which gave rise to the Crusades—

“When Europe gathered such a host from far,
And kindled Asia with the flames of war”—

showed itself in the year 1212, in a form as strange
as it was unlooked for. While the nations and
warriors of Christendom were busied with various
crusading projects, a number of boys in France
and Germany formed the wild scheme of march-

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ing to rescue the Holy City from infidel hands.
Incredible as it may seem that such a plan could
be carried out, its rise and subsequent history are
so well attested by historians, that no doubt can
be thrown upon its truth. If we consider the
romantic spirit of the times, when the golden
light of chivalry shone on every adventurous en-
terprise, we may imagine that the recital of the
misery and oppression endured by pilgrims to the
land of promise, and the solemn summonses to the
liberation of the holy sepulchre, and the repeated
processions held with reference to that subject,

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may all have so worked on youthful imaginations, as that they should deem it practicable to execute a work which had fallen unaccomplished from the hands of princes and kings.

The originator of this juvenile band was a peasant boy named Stephen, of a village of Vendôme, upon the Loire. Like Joan of Arc in after years, he gave out that he had seen heavenly visions—that the Saviour himself had appeared to him in the guise of a poor pilgrim, and given him authority to preach the cross. In a short time he was surrounded by a large number of young followers. Shortly afterwards he removed from his native village to St. Denis, where the credulous populace honoured him as a worker of miracles, and his companions daily increased. When his fame got bruited abroad, several other young enthusiasts started up in various parts of France, and drew after them many followers; but all honoured the shepherd boy of Vendôme as their superior, and were fully persuaded that under his command they should obtain a glorious victory over the Saracenic arms. They revered him as a saint, and he was thought happy who could obtain a fragment of the garments worn by the holy youth.

It might naturally be supposed that immediate and adequate measures would be taken to suppress such a movement; but nothing shows more strongly the superstitious spirit of the age than that Philip Augustus thought it necessary to summon the professors of the University of Paris, and consult them on the propriety of interfering with the young crusaders. After serious deliberation, they pronounced it expedient to do so. The greater part of the ecclesiastics deemed the movement to be the effect of witchcraft. A royal edict was accordingly issued, commanding the boys to return to their homes and useful employments. This mandate was obeyed by some; but as no steps were taken to enforce it, the greater number held together as firmly as before. They constantly formed processions through the towns and hamlets, bearing banners, censers, and tapers, singing hymns suitable to their enterprise; and so far from being molested, were followed by admiring crowds, even labourers leaving their work to join the train. They were abundantly supplied with provisions and money; and when asked whither they went, replied, "We go to seek the Holy Cross beyond the seas."

The same spirit spread rapidly through Germany, where the standard of the cross was followed, not only by boys of humble rank, but by some of noble families, who resisted all the efforts of their friends to restrain them. A number of men also joined them, and seized on the contributions they had received. One of these offenders, however, was executed at Cologne, to gratify the popular indignation.

In process of time, the German boys, several thousands in number, clad in long pilgrim robes marked with a cross, and bearing scrips and staves in their hands, commenced their march towards Italy across the Alps, but their fanatical illusions were destined soon to give place to hardships and sufferings of the most pitiable description: many perished in traversing the rugged and desert mountains; some from excessive fatigue, others

from hunger and privation. When they descended into the fertile plains of Lombardy, their sufferings were not at an end; large parties fell into the hands of highway robbers, who stripped them of all their provisions, and left them to beg their way home in misery and destitution. Notwithstanding these hardships and dangers, an immense body, chiefly consisting of boys of about twelve years of age, but headed by a few adult pilgrims, arrived before the gates of Genoa, in August, 1212. The Emperor Otho and Pope Innocent III were then at variance, and the Genoese having taken part with the latter, dismay and consternation spread through the city at the report of a German host having appeared before the walls. These fears vanished on a closer view; a multitude of defenceless and destitute children, it was easily seen, could have no hostile design. Their object was soon made known. The poor children declared their expectation that the sea would be miraculously dried up to make a path for them to the holy land, and entreated that the Genoese would for a time allow them to rest and recruit in their city. The council, fearing that the admission of so many would be followed by scarcity of provisions, ordered them to quit their territories without delay. A few, however, who renounced their pilgrimage, were received into the city, and obtained various employments. Some of them, indeed, subsequently rose to honour and distinction; and, even in modern times, more than one of the noble families of Genoa traces its descent to these German fugitives. The rest pursued their journey, but with daily diminishing numbers. Many remained in the service of the Italian peasantry, and those who were able to endure the hardships of the homeward journey returned as outcast wanderers to their native land, which they had so recently left full of hope and confidence.

But we must return to France, where we left Stephen of Vendôme and his young crusaders preparing for an expedition, which was to meet with a still more deplorable termination than that we have just related. About 30,000 in number, they marched towards Marseilles to embark for Palestine, headed by Stephen, who rode in a tapestried chariot, attended by armed satellites. Their dreams of glory faded very quickly. A more atrocious plot is not recorded in history, than that laid for those simple-minded children by two slave merchants of Marseilles. On their arrival, the traders in question offered them the use of their ships to convey them to Syria without remuneration, pretending to rejoice in such an opportunity of aiding a pious enterprise. The unsuspecting boys accepted the offer with joy: they embarked in seven vessels, convinced that Providence had favoured them, and would soon crown all their hopes. After two days' sail, a violent storm swept the Mediterranean, two of the vessels were wrecked on the west coast of Sardinia, and all on board perished. In after years, a church was built upon the coast in memory of the New Innocents, as they were termed, and the bones of those washed on shore were shown as sacred relics. The other five ships escaped the storm; but, instead of landing in Syria, the ruthless merchants, who accompanied their prey, sailed for Egypt, and sold every one of their helpless victims in the slave market of Alexandria.

They took care that not one should remain to return to Europe with the tale of their base treachery. After eighteen years had passed away, one poor captive escaped to his native land: he related the sad story, and told that several hundred boys had been purchased by the Governor of Alexandria, and passed their days in servitude; eighteen had been tortured to death at Bagdad for refusing to embrace the Mohammedan faith; while four hundred had been bought by the Caliph, and treated with humanity. The avenging hand of God did not suffer the Marseillaise merchants to remain unpunished, for a few years after this horrible crime, the same men were convicted of a plot to betray the emperor Frederick II into the hands of a Mohammedan emir, and were executed along with an accomplice.

While pitying the superstition which for a moment tolerated so wild and calamitous an enterprise as the Crusade of the Children, we might reflect with profit on the energies put forth in that chivalrous age in pursuit of the imaginary and unattainable, so much greater than the efforts made in the cause of truth and righteousness by those who walk in the full noon-tide of gospel light. Were our missionary, bible, and other societies supported with half the vigour which in every age has been expended on chimerical projects, we should soon hear of greater results—new strongholds of paganism attacked and overcome by the true warriors of the cross, new subjects brought under allegiance to its sacred standard, and the knowledge of the Lord extending from sea to sea, from the river to the ends of the earth.

A DAY IN NINEVEH.

FOR ages Nineveh seemed blotted out of existence. The pyramid-looking mound of Nimroud is alluded to by Xenophon as a scene of crumbling ruins, when he and his ten thousand encamped there twenty-two centuries since. Lucian, who lived on the banks of the Euphrates in the second century, speaks of the great Assyrian city as at that time utterly destroyed, so that none could tell the spot it occupied. Its site was a waste four hundred years later, affording ample space for the movements of the two great armies of Heraclius and Rhazates. The elder Niebuhr passed over the spot without any perception of what it had been, even mistaking the ruins for ridges of hills. Mr. Rich, an enterprising traveller, some thirty years ago, began to examine certain of the mounds near Mosul, whence he found sufficient to indicate that there was something yet to be learnt respecting Nineveh, "that great city." But the discoveries he made were small; and a few fragments sent over to the British Museum, enclosed in a case three feet square, which also contained some from Babylon, were long afterwards all the relics which Europe possessed of the civilisation and art of two among the mightiest of ancient empires.

Less than ten years has produced an astonishing change in our knowledge of Nineveh. M. Botta and Dr. Layard have disinterred its remains, and thrown light on its history to such an extent, that it is easy now to transport ourselves to the banks

of the Tigris, and to see the city as it was in the days of its meridian splendour, its mightiest power, and most palmy pride. But a personal inspection of the Assyrian antiquities, preserved in the Louvre at Paris and in our own museum, still more powerfully excites the imagination, and gives vividness to the picture; because, there you have before you the very sculpture in which the arts, manners, and customs of the people are portrayed, and on which the eyes of the Ninevite citizens gazed between two and three thousand years ago. With the fresh remembrance of what may be seen in these national repositories of art, and with the accounts of Botta and Layard's researches before us, aided by the learning and reflection of other tasteful antiquaries, especially Fergusson and Smirke, we would endeavour to present a *tableau vivant* of ancient Nineveh; not drawing on our fancy for any of the materials, but simply weaving together what we have gathered by inspecting sculptures and studying books. As we shall suppose ourselves spending a day in the metropolis of Assyria nearly 3000 years ago, it will enable us the better to convey our impressions, if we may be permitted to indulge in the anachronism of employing allusions to subsequent times.

We are on the banks of the Tigris, then, by the great delta formed by that and the river Zab. The country round is undulating, but not mountainous; fertile, but needing the careful art of the husbandman to bring out its fruitfulness. The winter rains bountifully enrich the soil, but artificial irrigation is required, and many a canal has been cut for conveying over Assyrian farms the waters of the river, swollen by the melting of the snows on the mountains of Armenia. Vines, olives, and fig-trees are cultivated on the hills. "It is a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive oil and honey." A plough, not unlike an English one, cuts out the furrow in yonder field; and a cart, also resembling our own, drawn by oxen, is at this moment slowly passing before us.

Look along the river, and see how the palace gardens reach down to the margin of the water, terrace beneath terrace, adorned with flowering shrubs. Beside the broad steps, flagged with alabaster, brightly-painted galleys are moored; and, as you watch, you see groups of figures, in oriental costumes, descending to enjoy the cool breeze; while slaves are at their places on board, oar in hand, to row them up the stream.

Sit down here for a moment on the bank, under the shadow of those feathery palms, and watch the angler busy with his sport. Mark, too, that temple, under the shadow of which he stands, with its unornamented pilasters and massive columns, the entablature surmounted by little battlements in the Arabian style. Not far off, on the top of that gentle hill covered with the graceful cypress, you discern an altar, or monument, raised on a square base, with fluted shaft. But, perhaps, you have not much taste for architectural details; then look yonder at the bridge of boats; or, nearer still, observe those men rowing over the river in a large bark, with a chariot on board, some horses swimming after them, led along by bridles in the hand of him who occupies the lofty-crested stern.

But we must take you to the city itself. A great

city it is, of three days' journey, or sixty miles in circumference, including within that space, woods, gardens, fields, and pasture lands, whitened here and there with flocks. The city is not all walled round; but certain quarters or divisions of the city are so. In each of these divisions, a group of magnificent edifices, reared on elevated foundations, rises aloft with a kingly air over adjacent abodes and other buildings. Between these districts and fortified portions are the agricultural regions, with humble dwellings of mud and reeds, rounded at the top, and not appearing dissimilar to the wattled wigwams of modern days in lands half civilized. The Ninevites live also in tents as well as houses, and within them, you see, are articles of furniture, such as tables, couches and chairs; while suspended to the tent-poles are vases for cooling water in this sultry climate. The city, with these broad spaces of rural scenery spread between the fortified quarters, looks like an assemblage of cities rather than a gigantic unity. Yet, the latter it really is; and these distinct clusters of magnificent buildings have been raised at different times by mighty princes, who have thus extended the range of their capital, and sought to leave a monument of their wealth and glory.

Along the roads, under the walls of this huge fortification, you now see a royal procession: the king, gorgeously habited, riding in his chariot, with horses four-abreast; and other chariots containing standard-bearers, the animals richly caparisoned, "the Assyrians clothed in blue, captains and rulers, all of them desirable young men, horsemen riding upon horses." The chiefs of the eunuchs wear long robes and fringed scarfs and embroidered girdles. Soldiers are in coats of chained mail and conical-shaped helmets, just like the pictures of our Norman knights. The personages of the group evidently have taken especial care of their hair and beards—the former being gathered up on the shoulders, the latter curiously curled in rows. Their eye-lids are painted black, their ears are pierced with rings, and their wrists are encircled with elegant bracelets. As the royal cortège sweeps up towards one of the neighbouring palaces, there are ladies looking over the battlements of the walls between the towers, upon the brilliant pageantry, with evident signs of interest. Their hair flows over their shoulders, but it is confined about the head with a fillet; their dress is fastened round the waist by a sash. The walls of the fortifications are of immense thickness, some as much as forty-five feet, and are composed of two or three courses of massive masonry, to the height of about four feet. Above, the structure is of sun-dried bricks, for which the materials are abundantly supplied in the alluvial soil of the neighbourhood. The edifices which crown the different quarters, and form the citadels, are raised conspicuously on artificial mounds or platforms. Let us examine the one before us.

We ascend, and pass through a gateway placed on a noble terrace in front of the main building, crossing a beautiful garden full of the richest colours and sweetest odours. We reach another elevation in front of the chief entrance. Climbing the broad steps which conduct to the top, we there pass between gigantic figures, which are of frequent occurrence in this strange city, and must

detain us for a moment. The outer edge on each side exhibits two human-headed bulls, with lofty wings, standing back to back; and betwixt them an enormous human figure strangling a lion in his arms. Between these there are two other winged bulls looking outwards, designed on a yet vaster scale. Statues of this description adorn every part of this huge pile of architecture. Winged lions, of the same general character with the bulls, are found in other portions of the city, guarding the approach to stately edifices. As many as six may be found gracing one doorway—two forming the pillars, and two placed on the anterior front of each of the lateral piers. Certain of these colossal creatures have human arms with the legs of lions, one hand carrying a goat or stag, the other a bunch of flowers. They are carved in stone of different kinds, and manifest the eminence of the sculptor's skill. They are bold in execution as well as design, and have a life-like appearance if you continue to gaze on them. The features in the face are thrown out in strong relief, while the rows of curls on the beard and the feathers on the wings are chiselled with exquisite skill and truthfulness. Amazing strength is expressed in the distinctly-marked muscles of the limbs, and the hoof of the bull and paw of the lion are hewn with admirable precision. These strange animals are clothed with drapery, fastened by a bandage displaying tasseled ends.

We must, however, hasten away from these specimens of Assyrian art, and enter one of the courts to gaze on the immense façades before us. In the centre is a splendid portal, consisting of two advanced pedestals, on each side of which stand another pair of bulls, back to back, with another giant in conflict with a lion. Courts, surrounded by such façades, having portals of the kind now described, occur with a frequency that confuse the stranger who has only time to take a hasty glance. The attention of the visitor may well be rivetted on these external walls, which are all sculptured and painted over with a life-like form, especially now that the sun is at the noon-day hour shedding on them, through a pure oriental atmosphere, his most brilliant beams. The daily life, the manners and customs, the costumes and ornaments, the occupations and tastes of Assyrian society, from the monarch and his court down to the humblest soldier and the meanest artisan, are depicted on these walls; so that, as from the surface of a calm lake or river, the surrounding scenery of the city is thrown back in all its shapes and hues.

But we have not yet entered within the building. Step into this vast chamber through one of its great doorways. Take a side one, and glance at the winged figures, human and hawk-headed, which, instead of common posts, sustain the lintel. The centre entrance is a repetition of the winged bulls. Having entered, look around. What a collection of bas-reliefs on the wall! To the height of ten feet or more, there are slabs of alabaster, exhibiting the achievements of Assyrian monarchs. War is the principal subject. Chariots and horsemen are seen going out to the field, or engaged in the conflict, or returning from the victory. Captives are paying tribute or undergoing punishment. The pleasures of the chase relieve these martial scenes. There are trees and huntsmen. Yonder

are representations of the Assyrian court; and again, there are subjects of religious significance. The eye is bewildered with these minutely carved and variegated slabs, affording materials for the study of the kingdom's history, the monarch's character, and the people's employments. Courses of sun-burnt bricks surmount these slabs, which are enamelled and painted with architectural ornaments, honeysuckles, and scrolls. The walls of this long chamber are carried up to the height of about 19 feet, with a low parapet on the top, which from its exceeding breadth forms a platform where people can walk. Double rows of dwarf pillars run along the platform and support a flat roof, plastered on the upper surface. Two rows of pillars also divide the centre of the hall lengthwise, and bear up the main roof, which is also flat, angular roofs with trussed timbers being apparently unknown in this stage of architectural design. Curtains are hung round these upper stories, and serve to temper the sunlight as it flows into the body of the hall. The ceiling is painted in gorgeous colours, and inlaid with precious wood and ivory. The beams are of cedar and gold leaf, and plates of precious metal are profusely used in the decoration. The chamber is paved with alabaster slabs, curiously inscribed with royal names, genealogies, and exploits. Winged bulls, monstrous animals, and a tree of mystic import, are of constant occurrence among the ornaments of this and other chambers. At the upper end is the colossal figure of the king in adoration before the supreme deity, or receiving from his attendants the sacred cup. He is attended by warriors bearing his arms, and ministered to by winged priests or presiding divinities. His robes, and those of his followers, are adorned with groups of human figures, animals, and flowers. This building, within the halls of which we wander, has a two-fold design. It is a temple as well as a palace. A sacred character is given to all its courts and chambers. The king is priest—a hallowed, almost a divine, personage. He is the worshipper, the friend, the child of the gods. The symbol to which he pays his adoration is a winged figure, in a circle, carrying a sword and holding a bow. It betokens the deity of war, and is in harmony with the character of the nation, whose dominant tastes and favourite pursuits are all martial. The monarch is regarded as the special object of the divine care; and in the bas-reliefs which stud his palace walls, the mystic sign, betokening the presence and protection of the deity, is represented above his head.

While we have been examining this hall, so worthy of the regal palace it adorns, the stone slabs—presenting the historical records of the kingdom—have so absorbed our attention as to render us insensible to the eunuchs, officers, and soldiers who have passed to and fro to perform their master's bidding. But a spectacle of living magnificence now invites our notice; and we must stand back to see the sovereign and his court as they enter through the spacious doorway formed by statues with eagle heads. The monarch wears on his shoulders a splendid cape adorned with tassels, with an embroidered robe beneath, which is edged with fringes and descends to the ankles. He wears a tiara, a golden necklace, earrings, bracelets, and sandals. He is attended by an

eunuch, who holds in his hand a kind of parasol or fly-flapper, to shade the monarch's face and drive off the insects. It is curiously constructed and carved, the one end opening like the petals of a broad flower, the other wrought into the shape of a lion's head.

With the king are the officers of his court, in gorgeous array, and mail-clad warriors bearing bow and lance. The Great Hall is turned into a chamber of audience, and the representatives of conquered and tributary provinces are coming to do homage to the great king. The throng around the monarch share in his pride and satisfaction; and the ladies of the harem are looking down through the lattice and curtains of the gallery upon this grand display of their lord's dominion. The tributaries enter. One brings the model of a fortress, significant of the city he represents; another holds a couple of vases; a third carries on his shoulders the figure of a car. Other personages, bringing emblematical presents or real treasures, throng the hall, while the larger forms of tribute remain without, including camels and elephants for the king's service. We see here a large source of Assyrian revenue. The king's coffers and store-houses are fed by draining the wealth of dependent states. The abject servility of the tribute-payers evinces the crushing despotism under which they writhe, and their fears of provoking the displeasure of their potent suzerain. Besides the riches thus obtained by the annual payments exacted from those the Ninevites have subdued, there are preserved, in the strongholds of this royal palace, the gods of many countries whom they have conquered, and which the soldiers of the king brought upon their shoulders into the city to swell the glories of their master's triumph.

A banquet is preparing. The monarch is to feast with the men of chief estate. The tables are spread in a spacious hall; sumptuous provisions are laid out; and the glittering plate of this oriental prince is brought forth to deck the board. The guests do not recline on couches as in some eastern feasts, but sit on chairs, or rather stools, placed on either side the tables, after European fashion. The throne-seat of the monarch is of the same shape with the rest, having legs richly carved at the bottom, and bulls' heads at the corners of the seat; but it is altogether without a back. He takes his place; his lords and mighty men and warriors fill up the tables; eunuchs draw water or wine out of large vases for the fountains, and bear it in cups shaped at the bottom in the form of a lion's head. The company have no knives or forks, but eat with their fingers, and every now and then lift up the lion-headed beakers to quaff the welcome beverage. Music adds to the pleasures of the feast. A band of performers is stationed in the hall, most of them with lyres. Both hands at the same time sweep over the instrument, which is fastened by a belt over the right shoulder.

We are permitted to penetrate the culinary mysteries of this vast palace. Entering one kitchen, we behold a woman boiling provisions in earthen pots, supported by tripod-like frames. Within another, we find two more dressing the carcase of a goat. In a third, a man is seen baking things in an oven. Again, we enter a fourth room, and there are females grinding corn,

one of them busily turning round a hand-mill. From the kitchen you may glance at the stables. Yonder is a slave grooming down a horse; and in another direction is a group of these animals, drinking at a tank.

Returning into the highway from this imperial abode, we see everywhere around us magnificent specimens of Assyrian art. Courts adorned with statues, gateways flanked with bulls and lions; but we miss in the prevalent style of architecture certain features that are predominant in the buildings of other lands, such as columns and windows. Facades and walls would have a dull appearance, and be without effect on the eyes of beholders, were it not for the elaborate sculptures which adorn them. As we leave the temple-palace, we pass some beautifully-carved sphinxes in alabaster; the body of each is that of a winged lion, the face is beardless, and the cap square; the top forms a flat slab fitted for sacrifices and offerings to the gods. Not far from it is a beautiful obelisk, about the height of a very tall man, with five small bas-reliefs carved one below another, and a long piece of writing, in cruciform characters, beneath. The subject of the sculpture is some great victory, the king standing with a captive prostrate at his feet, and eunuchs advancing with vases, shawls, rare wood, tusks, and other articles of tribute. Various animals are also represented among the trophies—elephants, camels, antelopes, bulls, and a rhinoceros—evidently indicating distant conquests.

The Ninevites are particularly addicted to hunting. Nimrod, who laid the first stone of the Assyrian kingdom, was "a mighty hunter before the Lord;" and Ninus, the reported builder of the city, was as renowned for his exploits in the chase as for his achievements in the field. In earlier times, when the immediate vicinity of human dwellings was infested with wild beasts, it was as important a service for a prince to clear the neighbouring forests of these savage animals as for him to defend his territory against the assaults of invading armies. The monarchs of this empire have therefore combined the hunter with the warrior, and in this respect the pursuits of the people have ever resembled those of the prince. They are a nation of hunters. Parks, and paradises, and preserves for animals of all kinds, are maintained within the gigantic boundaries of this kingdom-like city at immense expense. Lions, tigers, wild boars, antelopes, and many varieties of birds, are kept for the diversion of the king, and those who are privileged to join him in the sport.

We are now on the outskirts of a field where the people of Nineveh practise archery. Yonder is a target, placed among the trees, on the disk of which is inscribed a lion. A stalwart figure is aiming his arrow at the mark. Wandering some distance through fields of corn, and tracts covered with forest trees, we light upon a party actively engaged in their favourite sports. They hunt in chariots. A lion lies slain; another, stung to madness by the wounds he has received, turns on his assailants. The charioteer urges on his horses. A stately figure in royal attire turns round with his bow, and aims a dart at the animal. Soldiers on foot, with spear and shield, are close behind to assist in slaying the beast unable to escape. In another direction, you may see a bull-hunt. Here,

too, chariots are employed; and men on horses, holding in their hands both spears and bows, are in eager pursuit. The animal falls, pierced by many an arrow. Wild oxen, covered with long shaggy hair, are hunted in this way.

But we must terminate these ramblings. Night is coming on. The sun has gone down, and left much of the great city in deep shadow. The outline of the huge masses of building stands out distinctly against the clear blue sky, up which the broad moon is climbing, to give views of Nineveh solemn and suggestive. We sit down upon an eminence, and gaze upon the lengthening masses of building that stretch out into the distance, intersected with gardens and woodlands. The scene indicates wealth, power, and civilisation—civilisation beyond that of Egypt, but below that of Greece. But who, in thinking of the sculptures we have examined, can help feeling that the civilisation of Nineveh is instinct with a spirit of proud egotism? It is a kingdom inflated with surpassing vanity. They flatter—they exaggerate—they almost deify themselves. Themselves, great and mighty; others, poor and weak. Themselves, conquerors; others, vanquished. Themselves, rulers; others, slaves. Alas! too true also of all people; each nation exalting itself over other nations, forgetful of the brotherhood of the race. And superstition and idolatry corrupt Ninevite civilisation. These evils have left their impress everywhere. In the very fulness of national pride, the Assyrians so degrade themselves as to make bulls and lions the symbols of their divinities. They reverse God's order. The inferior creation which they were meant to rule, they really worship; the true God they ignore. The one living eternal personal Being who made them and all things, they know not, because they have not liked to retain him in their knowledge.

Such are the pictures and thoughts of Nineveh, suggested by what we have seen and read. Confirmations are thus afforded of what the Hebrew scriptures have described and predicted respecting this extraordinary place and people. How the researches of Botta and Layard silence the infidel, and strengthen the faith of the Christian, and assist us in the intelligent study of the sacred records! Incidental allusions by the historians and prophets, to manners and customs seeming strange, are verified by the monuments now brought to light. It is demonstrated that the Bible gives a true picture of the ancient life of the world. The crumbling mounds of Mosul, and the rest, show the fulfilment of scripture prophecies relative to the ruin of Nineveh, while the records of the past they so long entombed, but which are now revealed in the nineteenth century, exhibit the glory of Nineveh before its ruin. For hundreds of years the naked, melancholy banks of the Tigris showed that the Hebrews were true prophets. The discoveries of the present century show that the Hebrews were true historians. And what a background does the description we have given afford for bringing out the wonderful story in the book of Jonah. We see the great city, wherein were more than six-score thousand persons, who could not discern between their right hand and their left, and also much cattle. We see it as he saw it; see it as it was when God looked on it with so

much compassion, and gave reasons to the angry prophet why it was spared. Nor can we fail to recognise the divine hand in the effect of Jonah's preaching, otherwise, surely, a proud, egotistic, idolatrous people would never have bowed before the God of Israel, at the voice of a humble, sorrowful stranger. What a scene it was when the people sought the true God in prayer—the brightest hour that ever dawned on Nineveh. "There was a mighty change—to many eyes it would have appeared a change for the worse. Suppose there were ambassadors there from some of the magnificent monarchs of the east; they might think the city miserably degraded in comparison with its previously splendid and gay condition, the brilliancy of the palace and court, the array of guards and legions, the gay processions, amusements, and theatres. But in the one case the divine displeasure hovered over it; in the other, the divine clemency was shining on it."

DESCENT OF THE PRECIPICE AT LAKE MASAYA, SOUTH AMERICA.

WE dashed into the plaza of Managua, says the adventurous traveller from whom we quote, with steaming steeds, and rode to the posoda. It was not nine o'clock, yet we had ridden twenty-six miles. Here we breakfasted. At eleven, when we started for Masaya, the sky was clouded, but it did not rain, and we rode at a rapid pace over the intervening thirty-six miles. Again we paused on the "mal pais" of the volcano, and looked down upon its broad, desolate fields—doubly black and desolate under a lowering sky. Again we lingered in the noiseless streets of sweet, embowered Nindirí, born of the lake and mountain, and at four o'clock entered the suburbs of Masaya.

Half or three-quarters of a mile from the plaza, we came to the edge of the immense sunken area, at the bottom of which is the lake. It is surrounded by precipitous cliffs, except upon the side of the volcano, opposite the city, where the lava has flowed over, and made a gradual but rough and impassable slope to the water. The first stage of the descent is by a broad flight of steps, sunk in the solid rock, terminating in an area, fenced by a kind of balustrade, or parapet, of the same material. I looked over this, and below was a sheer precipice, from which I recoiled with a shudder. Here stands a little cross firmly fixed in the rock. The path now turns to the right, winding along the face of the declivity, here cut in the cliff, there built up with masonry, and beyond secured by timbers, fastened to the trees, many of which are of gigantic size, covered with vines, and twining their gnarled roots in every direction among the rocks. These rocks themselves are burned and blistered with heat, with vitrified surfaces of red or black, resembling the hardest enamel. Were it not for the verdure, which hides the awful steepness and yawning depths, the path would prove a fearful road for people of weak heads and treacherous nerves, whose confidence in themselves would not be improved by the crosses which, fastened among the stones, or against the trees, point out the places of fatal catastrophes. Our guide advised us to take off our boots before commencing the

descent, and the women whom we met slowly toiling up, in many places holding on by their hands, panted "*quita sus botas!*"—"take off your boots!" But we were more used to boots than they, and kept them on—not without subjecting ourselves to a suspicion of fool-hardiness. Down, catching glimpses of the lake, apparently directly beneath us, and as distant as when we started—down, down—it was full fifteen or twenty minutes before we reached the bottom. Here were numerous places among the fallen rocks and the volcanic débris of the cliff, where the *aguadoras* (water carriers) filled their jars. I asked if the lake was deep. An *aguadora* replied that it was "insondable," bottomless; and to give me practical evidence of its great depth, paddled ashore, and taking a large stone in each hand, went out not more than thirty feet, and then sank. She was gone so long that I began to grow nervous, lest some accident had befallen her in those unknown depths, but directly she popped up to the surface, almost in the very place where she had disappeared. She gasped a moment for breath, and then, turning to me, exclaimed, "you see!"

The water is warm, but limpid, and, it is said, pure. When cooled, it is sweet and palatable. Considering that the lake is clearly of volcanic origin, with no outlet, and in close proximity to the volcano of the same name, this is a little remarkable. Most lakes of this character are more or less impregnated with saline materials.

The view of the lake, and the volcano rising on the opposite shore, from the place where we were seated, was singularly novel and beautiful. Above us towered a gigantic cebia, festooned with vines, amongst which a company of monkeys were scrambling, chattering and grimacing. Occasionally one would slip down the long, rope-like tendrils of the vines, scold vigorously for a moment, and then, as if suddenly alarmed, scramble up again amongst the branches.

The cliffs which wall in the lake resemble the Palisades on the Hudson river, but are much higher, and destitute of the corresponding masses of débris at the base. The early Spanish chroniclers speak of them as a "thousand fathoms" high; later travellers have changed the fathoms to yards, but even that is probably an exaggeration. We had no means of determining the question, and would not have gone down again, after once regaining the upper earth, to have solved it a thousand times. The descent was mere *bagatelle*, but the ascent one of those things which answer for a lifetime, and leave no desire for repetition. We reached the upper cross after a most wearisome scramble, only fit for monkeys to undertake, and sat down on the last flight of stone steps, wholly exhausted, covered with perspiration, and our temples throbbing from the exertion, as if they would burst. The *aguadoras*, accustomed to it from infancy, seemed to suffer almost as much as ourselves, and, as they passed the cross, signed in the usual manner, in acknowledgment of their safe return.

All the water for domestic purposes is thus painfully brought up from the lake. During the "*invierno*" the rain is collected in tanks, or ponds, in the courts of the principal houses, for the use of the horses and cattle; but when this supply becomes exhausted, as it does towards the close of

the dry season, the water for their use has also to be obtained here. An attempt had been made to cut a path for mules down the face of the cliff, but it had failed. About two leagues from Masaya, however, the people had met with better success, and there is now a place where animals, with some difficulty, can reach the lake. There are a number of towns, besides Masaya, which obtain their water from the same source. These towns existed, and the same practice prevailed, before the Conquest, when the country was tenfold more populous than now. Water-carrying seems to have always been one of the principal institutions of this section of country, and as there are no streams, and never will be, it is likely to remain about the only enduring one, or until some enterprising American shall introduce a grand forcing pump, worked, perhaps, by volcanic power—for, having made the lightning a "common carrier," I do not see why volcanoes should not be made to earn their living.

Oviedo has described this lake as it was in 1529, and it will be seen that it has little changed since then. His estimate of the height of the cliffs surrounding it, about one thousand feet, is probably not far from the truth.

"Another very remarkable lake is found in this province, although it cannot be compared, in extent, with *Cocibola* (Nicaragua). The water is much better. It is called the lake of *Lendiri* (Nindiri or Masaya), and the principal cazique, who lives on its banks, bears the same name. This lake is about three leagues from Granada, but they are so long that we may safely call them four. I arrived there on St. James's-day, July 25, 1529, and stopped with Diego Machuca. I was well received and hospitably entertained, and I went with him to visit this lake, which is a very extraordinary one. To reach it, we had to take a road, the descent of which is so rapid that it should be called rather a stairway than a road. Adjoining it we saw a round, high mountain, on the summit of which is a great cavity, from which issues a flame as brilliant but stronger and more continuous than that of Etna, or Mount Gibel, in Sicily. It is called the Volcano of Masaya. Towards the south, an arid and open slope extends to the shores of the lake; but on the other sides, the lake is shut in by walls, which are very steep and difficult of descent. I beheld a path, as I was led along, the steepest and most dangerous that can be imagined; for it is necessary to descend from rock to rock, which appear to be of massive iron, and in some places absolutely perpendicular, where ladders of six or seven steps have to be placed, which is not the least dangerous part of the journey. The entire descent is covered with trees, and is more than one hundred and thirty fathoms before reaching the lake, which is very beautiful, and may be a league and a half both in length and breadth. Machuca, and his cazique, who is the most powerful one in the country, told me that there were, around the lake, more than twenty descents worse than this by which we had passed, and that the inhabitants of the villages around, numbering more than one hundred thousand Indians, came here for water. I must confess that, in making the descent, I repented more than once of my enterprise, but persisted, chiefly from shame of avowing my fears, and partly from the encour-

agement of my companions, and from beholding Indians loaded with an aroba and a half of water (nearly 40 lbs.) who ascended as tranquilly as though travelling on a plain."—*Squier's People and Scenery of Nicaragua*.

ST. PAUL'S CROSS AND THE REFORMATION.

EVERY individual has his own separate reminiscences—his own stock of pleasing or mournful associations. One passes and repasses a particular spot without any awakened interest, while another who chances to come that way is excited by the most painful or pleasing emotions. So is it with the spot on which we are now standing. Thousands pass through St. Paul's churchyard without reflection, or merely to please the eye and observe the fashions; while to those who have cultivated familiarity with the past, there arise associations of an instructive and deeply interesting character. We regard this spot as an elevation from which to look back towards the dawn of that day of light and liberty which we now enjoy. It is here that we may contemplate the struggle between light and darkness, truth and error. Here we catch some of the first glimpses of the light which is seen bursting through the thick clouds of Romish error at the commencement of the sixteenth century.

It is scarcely possible to form an accurate idea of the old churchyard from the present one—the aspect and extent differing so materially. The old churchyard was bounded by a wall, which ran along by Ave Maria-lane, Paternoster-row, Old Change, Carter-lane, and Creed-lane; and the area thus enclosed was enlivened by a spacious grass plat. But how changed the scene! House upon house has invaded the verdant lawn, and the roar of unnumbered vehicles is heard where probably at that period the choristers of the air caroled their sweetest notes.

Not far from the present depository of the Religious Tract Society, at No. 65, once stood the celebrated St. Paul's Cross. There, in 1521, bishop Fisher uttered the fulminations of Rome against Luther. Near the cross sat Cardinal Wolsey, the pope's legate, beneath a canopy of gold, attended by foreign ambassadors, as well as lords and prelates. During the sermon, a number of Protestant books were committed to the flames, the cardinal witnessing the process. In 1526, the act was repeated. In 1530, again was a vast concourse assembled:—to hear the word of God? to read it for themselves? Nay, but to witness the burning of that holy book!

Good William Tyndale had prepared a translation of the New Testament. Being unable to accomplish the printing of it in England, he fled to the continent, where he performed that noble work. The sacred volumes soon found their way to these shores, and gained a rapid circulation. Various attempts were made to prevent the diffusion of these translations; and it was at length determined to buy them up at Antwerp. A large number was purchased with a view to their being destroyed.

"The spectacle-loving folks of those days might

be seen wending up Ludgate-hill and along the side of Cheape, to assemble round St. Paul's Cross. The promenade in the middle aisle of the old gothic cathedral, where London citizens were wont to saunter and chat, transact business, and wile away an idle hour, was almost emptied by the attractive influence of the scene to be enacted without the walls." A rich and large sacrifice was now to be offered at the shrine of papal intolerance. The fire was kindled, Testament after Testament was flung on the blazing pyre, the people were solemnly warned against the *sin of reading the word of God!* The Bible was declared not for the people to read, but for the priest to explain! The version made in the English tongue by a thoughtful, learned, pious mind was only fit for the flames! The crowds about the old churchyard looked on the spectacle that day with varied feelings. Some thought all this was right, others that it was all wrong. "This burning," says Burnet, "had such a hateful appearance in it, being generally called a burning of the word of God, that people from thence concluded there must be a visible contrariety between that book and the doctrines of those who handled it; by which both their prejudice against the clergy, and their desire of reading the New Testament, were increased." But in spite of searchings and burnings, proclamations and buying up of editions, Testaments continued to pour in from the continent. "So mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed."

battle-ground of truth. There a few courageous and divinely-taught men stood up against a



ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL EARLY IN 15TH CENTURY.

host of enemies, resolved "to perish rather than betray their cause." Multitudes gathered round the rude old rostrum, on seats or in standing room, while the king and court, the lord mayor and dignified citizens, had their covered galleries to listen to the plain statements and warm appeals

of the preachers. When the weather prevented the general congregation from occupying the open space, there was a place of shelter found for them under what were called the shrouds, which abutted on the church wall. There old Miles Coverdale, Jewel, Bentham, Hooker, and other worthies in the good cause, raised their voices with holy freedom and joy, in the advocacy of truths for which they had recently suffered exile and privation. In the Lent of 1560, some celebrated sermons were delivered on this spot. We are informed that, on the 3rd of March, Grindal, the new bishop, preached in his rochet and chimere before the mayor and aldermen, and a great auditory. After the sermon a psalm was sung (which was the common practice of the reformed churches abroad), wherein the people also joined their voices, breaking forth in the open air round the court and churchyard of St. Paul—a psalm of thanksgiving for recovered liberty from Romish thralldom.*

Others laboured—we reap the fruits of their toils. The cross has long since been taken down; but the effect of the preaching of those good men to whom we have alluded is still felt, and their works are still appreciated. The depository in the churchyard, near the north door of St. Paul's, contains the writings and lives of many of these distinguished individuals. "They rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."



PREACHING AT PAUL'S CROSS.

St. Paul's Cross stands forth in history as the very Thermopylae of the Reformation. It was the

* "London in Ancient and Modern Times."

NEW MOVEMENT FOR WORKING MEN.

BY OLD HUMPHREY.

OLD Humphrey has lately heard of a move onward for working men; and believing, as he does, that it will be to them a benefit, he feels anxious to lend it a helping hand. He wants to set this kind-hearted movement in a proper light, and hopes to show as clearly as that two and two make four, that properly carried out it must produce a harvest of advantages. May this truly patriotic plan never fall into improper hands, never be used for any other than disinterested purposes, and never have a lower object than man's good and God's glory!

A few well-informed heads and Christian hearts, with prayerful consideration and persevering philanthropy, have formed a society to do good; the name given to it is that of the "Working man's Educational Union, for the elevation of the Working Classes, as it regards their physical, intellectual, moral, and religious condition;"* and the means purposed to be employed are those of attractive lectures, interesting libraries, and instruction classes.

First, it is intended to prepare and publish, in as cheap a form as possible, such drawings, maps, and plans as will be likely to attract the attention of labouring men, and enable them the better to understand and enjoy the lectures they may hear.

Secondly, outline or skeleton lectures will be drawn up in the plainest and most effectual way possible, to enable persons to give lectures who have never before been accustomed to do so.

Thirdly, cheap and interesting books for lending or reading libraries, written in a Christian spirit, on useful subjects, will be published, to increase the reader's general knowledge, and to assist him in turning the lectures he hears to good account.

And, fourthly, instruction classes will be promoted to assist and forward that desire for knowledge which the lectures may awaken. It is thought that this mode of proceeding, carried out in a frank, kindly, liberal, and persevering spirit, can hardly fail in effecting an extended good; and, as I am decidedly of this opinion, there can be nothing unreasonable in my speaking in its praise.

It is no new thing for lectures of different kinds to be given both in towns and villages, for, of late years, this has become comparatively common; but it is a new thing to have skeleton lectures and drawings prepared and published at a cheap rate, so that hundreds may give lectures who have never been accustomed to do so. It is, now, not at all improbable, that lectures will be increased in number fifty and a hundred-fold, and that thus knowledge will be very extensively circulated.

Though rail-roads have broken in upon the sequestered quietude of unnumbered localities, there are yet hundreds of villages, which from the beginning to the end of the year have seldom or never any excitement greater than that occasioned by the visit of an Indian Lascar, two or three Dutch broom girls, or an Italian boy with his barrel organ. But let us suppose, that a village bearing the name of Sandiford, having an annual wake, an ill-attended school, and inhabitants sadly deficient in

information, is unexpectedly aroused by the sound of a tabor and pipe; and that an old-fashioned man is seen habited in a loose coat, with large pockets and long skirts, leading along a bear, a monkey, and dancing dogs. A great sensation is produced, and in a little time a wondering throng is assembled. The sound of the tabor and pipe is irresistible; and not only youth with his sparkling eye, but age with his thin grey locks, hastens to the village green. A ring is made, and the bear stands up on his uncouth hind legs, with his master's cocked hat on his head, and the monkey on his shoulder. The music plays and the dogs dance, so that what with the bear, the monkey, and the man, the dancing dogs dressed up in gay clothes, the tabor and pipe, and the crowd, it is altogether a holiday time. This holiday, however, cannot last for ever, for the fun, like a firework, is soon over, and leaves nothing behind it. The tabor and pipe cease; the man gleans a few pence from the gaping throng, and then passes on, leaving the village a little poorer than he found it. He has left behind him

No jewel of virtue, alluring and bright,

Outshining the gold of the miser;

No woman, or child, has got good from the sight,

And no man been made better or wiser.

Let us next imagine that a lecturer visits the village, and announces that in the school-room he purposes to give a lecture on astronomy, rendering, by means of his large drawings of the heavenly bodies and his plain descriptions, our solar system so clear and intelligible, that all who hear him will understand it: the admission being but a penny, or, perhaps, nothing at all. A goodly number of working people and children attend, wonderfully pleased by what they see, and much surprised at what they hear.

The lecturer wins their good opinion by telling them, that though he happens to know a little more about astronomy than they do, they know a great deal more of farming and country work than he does; and he wishes that in such matters he was half as wise as his company. He relates cheerful anecdotes in his lecture, and interweaves it at the same time with appropriate moral and religious remarks. Thus, by a judicious union of science with theology, and of the works of creation with the word of revelation, he, in some degree, impresses the hearts of his hearers with scriptural truth, while he expands their minds with knowledge.

And now the lecture becomes the talk of the village, for though much of it is forgotten, some parts of it are remembered. It is true, that nurse Hollins will by no means believe a word about the sun being a million times as big as the earth—that is quite out of the question; and Sherrard, the shoemaker, says it is a "moral impossibility" for it to be ninety-five millions of miles off; but old Briggs, the mole-catcher, who to this day takes in Moore's Almanack, with all its absurdities, stops their mouths by declaring that "stronomers" must know all about the heavens, or they could never foretel the coming of a comet and an eclipse.

The lecturer is gone, but he has left something behind him; a dawning of additional intellect; a

* Offices, 43, Skinner-street, Snow-hill.

thirst after knowledge; a desire to improve opportunities in attaining it; and now the machinery of the onward move for working men comes into play. A gentleman of the neighbourhood has made a present for the good of his native village; a box arrives from London, full of beautiful outlines, sketches and drawings, with a skeleton lecture or two on natural history, geography, and other departments of knowledge; and the worthy clergyman, or the schoolmaster, or one of the Sunday school teachers, has undertaken to deliver a course of lectures. A new impulse is thus given, a new interest is excited, threatening war to the wake and death to the pothouse, and betokening prosperity to the pulpit and the school, and knowledge, order, morality, virtue, and piety to the people of Sandiford.

Their cultured reason takes a wider range,
And mind and manners for the better change.

Have I overdrawn my picture? I hope not; but if so, blame must fall on others, as well as on Old Humphrey. Lectures may not always be prepared with care; lecturers may be deficient in zeal, judgment, cheerfulness, or kindness; the inhabitants of Sandiford may haply prove unusually obdurate, or other unlooked-for causes may retard this onward move for working men. It may be, too, that this instrument of good in some cases may be used for party purposes; and it was with the shadowy apprehension of this latter possibility, I expressed my unfeigned desire that this truly patriotic plan might always be pursued in the spirit of its founders—never fall into improper hands—never be used for other than disinterested ends, and never aim at less than man's good and God's glory. But away with all shadowy forebodings! Let me rather encourage the brighter expectations of hope, and put a few finishing touches to the picture I have drawn.

Let me anticipate the time when the onward move for working men has not only been made at the village of Sandiford, but followed up energetically, and that lecture after lecture has trodden, as it were, on each other's heels; geography has succeeded natural history, and astronomy followed hard on geography. A real love for lectures has been called forth, and now, whether the next subject of the lecturer be Paganism and Christianity, the Ruins of Nineveh, the Catacombs at Rome, or the Manners and Customs of the Jews, there are plenty of people ready to attend it. The village is looking up in every way; a lending library is established; classes meet for instruction, and progress is made in general knowledge, kindly feeling, and the love of God's holy word. The wake is set aside, and the tap-room at the "Fighting Cocks" has very little company.

The working men appear a different race,
And Sandiford is quite another place.

And now once more comes to the village the old-fashioned man, in his loose coat with large pockets and long skirts, bringing with him his shaggy bear, his nimble monkey, and his dancing dogs. A gaping throng surrounds him as before, but they are mostly women and children. Such of the young men as see the animals regard them with an added interest, on account of the knowledge of

natural history they have acquired. They know something of brown bears, black bears, and white bears; are not altogether ignorant of the habits on monkeys, apes, and baboons, and are quite familiar with the different kinds of dogs. The lecturer has his eye upon the scene, and the very next lecture given at the school-room is on kindness and cruelty to animals. Thus passing occurrences are turned to account; the services rendered by the brute creation to man pointed out, and the duty of all to be merciful and kind to God's creatures is fully set forth. The lecturer, too, after moving his auditors to sympathy for dumb creatures, leads them to higher objects.

If there are not hundreds of Sandifords, there are hundreds of villages, and towns too, that are fearfully deficient in intellect, morality, and piety. The pulpit and the school require every assistance which can be given them to dissipate ignorance and increase knowledge, to repress vice and propagate virtue. This onward move for the working man being the declared enemy of all that is evil, and the friendly auxiliary of all that is good, deserves support. We cannot make worldly men go to hear sermons, but they will go of their own accord to hear entertaining lectures, which may be made both profitable and impressive. These, then, may become the avenue to Christian truth, the pleasant portal to the house of God.

Reader, the days are hurrying onward with an eagle's flight. Much have you to do; and if the hair of your head be half as grey as mine, you have no time to lose. Look around you; see what is taking place; lend a hand to all you can serve; pay the debt you owe to the sons and daughters of labour, and help your fellow pilgrims on their way to heaven. My closing remark is this:—

Be kind to all, and forward, if you can,
This onward movement for a working man.

INTEGRITY AT TRIAL.

A COUNTING-HOUSE SKETCH.

ONE fine summer's afternoon, several years ago, a youth of one-and-twenty might have been seen stepping on board the steam-boat that made a weekly voyage between E— and London. He was not alone, for his father and sister accompanied him to the vessel's side. They did not go on board, as the "Fair-maid" was on the eve of starting, and their adieus must be short and immediate. The young man pressed his sister's hand, as "the big tear gathered in his eye," and turning away his head, he felt the returned pressure of hers, and heard the softly spoken "farewell," with a heart almost overcome. It was the first time that word had been addressed to him, and he felt its full meaning keenly. Hastily, and with evident emotion, the father grasped the hand of his boy, as he said, "Now, Willie, don't forget—thorough integrity and a good conscience!"

The great paddle-wheels began to move; the "Fair-maid" left the wharf on her southward course; and the little family circle that was wont to gather around a right gladsome fireside was broken for the first time.

What an auspicious time for a sail! The sky was serene and cloudless. The wind, gentle as a zephyr,

had hushed the sea to repose. They have nothing to fear from the elements; and while the vessel is proceeding so pleasantly, allow us to give the parties a more befitting introduction.

William Edney and Co. was the name of a highly respectable firm in the provincial seaport which the steam-boat left. It was an old house, and its age had only imparted stability; decay was not then, nor is yet, apparent. The grandfather of the youth was the first, and, for many years, the only partner. Under his guidance, the little thing, almost a trifle, became an important concern; and in that condition, he resigned it into the hands of his son, the father of the young man. In the counting-house of the firm, young William had been for five years. He had acquired, during that time, some knowledge of the business which it was intended he should pursue; but his father, anxious that he might be able at all points to manage the old firm, thought a few years in London would be of no secondary advantage. For this reason he now journeyed thitherward.

Not many days after the day of sailing, William Edney, jun., might have been seen now and then threading the intricacies of the "City." The office of H. B. and Co. was in — Lane, one of those narrow streets which are so common near the waterside. That was his destination, and thither he went every morning, as close upon nine o'clock as any punctual man could do or desire. After a few weeks had passed, he was appointed to a certain department, namely, assistant to Mr. Orwood, the cashier of the establishment. Our country readers must remember that there is a mighty difference between a city and a provincial counting-house. In the former, there are departments and specific duties; in the latter, very often, one poor quill-driver manages the whole. In the performance of his duty, William gave satisfaction to his superior in office and the principals.

For a long time all went on smoothly and cheerily. But there was a sudden pause. One morning a messenger announced that the venerable Mr. Orwood was no more. After five-and-thirty years' attendance he was absent, never to return to the desk at the window, so long his favourite haunt. An awful stillness pervaded the counting-room that day. Many eyes were often turned to his vacant seat, as if they could scarcely credit the startling intelligence; some quailed, when they remembered that he who sat there on the previous day, was now a dweller in another world; and one or two, after a momentary stun, began to speculate regarding his probable successor.

The pause after a little while was broken, and the hum and bustle returned as before. Having been assistant-cashier, William Edney continued to take charge of money matters; but he had not been appointed successor. Several thought he would be; some others fancied he ought not to be; and one determined that, if he was, he should not be so long. The latter's scheme was ready for use, for he had begun to plan it ere Mr. Orwood was laid in the tomb. He had not much time to waste, nor had he many days to think over his intention, before one of the principals told the hero of our story to continue as he was doing. Nothing more passed. The young man had been active, attentive, upright, faithful; they saw this and were satisfied.

Not so Henry Herbert. This gentleman had been for a few years principal book-keeper in the establishment. On him devolved the task of what is technically styled "posting the ledger"—a duty everywhere important, but in his case particularly so, and onerous besides. His reasons for disagreement with the plan of his principals we know not. His salary was larger than Edney's; for though the latter had stepped into the office, he did not at the same time receive the emolument of Mr. Orwood. That, he neither sought nor dreamt of. Why then should Herbert be dissatisfied? He would not have changed positions with Edney, had salaries changed likewise. Perhaps his reason might be that he wished to change a laborious for a lightsome task, and earn his wages by less toil and trouble. His desire we cannot gainsay; it is in most men's minds to do so too. Perchance, kind reader, it may actuate both you and me. Be it so: but may our schemes to attain it be as opposite to Herbert's, as his character was to that of William Edney!

It was the practice in that, as it is in many mercantile houses, to make a half-yearly balancing of their books. The time had arrived, and our acquaintance, the book-keeper, was working right heartily to get all put in order. A trial balance was "taken out," and a deficit of 63*l.* stood against cash. To his fellow-clerks he announced it with seeming surprise. Indeed, they too were astonished, for Herbert had a character for wonderful correctness. He tried again, and the same result was the consequence. Another examined the balancing, and he could detect no error. As a last resource, Herbert proposed, apparently in a spirit the most laudable and exemplary, an examination of all the posting for the last six months. It was done, and still the same sum, neither more nor less, was wanting. As a matter of necessity, the "cash book" next came to be scrutinised; for it and it alone could now reveal the secret. Herbert was most diligent thereon—painfully diligent, yet anxious and troubled within himself. The victory was almost his; but it might miscarry.

After a considerable search, he pointed out an error to a companion. This one tried the addition of the long column. It was manifestly wrong, and the difference between the total as entered at the bottom of the page and the real amount was that same 63*l.* One after another proved its correctness; even Edney himself acknowledged, "there is a mistake or treachery somewhere."

It was a most painful and trying hour. Edney saw that his character was at stake, that his integrity was assailed; but how to deliver himself he knew not. Herbert, too, was fearfully anxious for his character, lest it should be unmasked. As the matter had assumed a serious aspect, one of the principals who was versed in all the mysteries of the books began a scrutiny of these. He it was who had appointed Edney to the cashiership; and he was deeply grieved to think that the son of his old friend should have an imputation so heinous cast upon him, staining his good name and affecting so materially the good opinion hitherto entertained of him. There he sat, worthy man, with the ponderous folio before him, turning over the leaves and gazing at the endless columns of figures, without any very definite notion for what he looked.

He had not long occupied himself with this task, before he was interrupted by the entrance of Mr. K——, a brother merchant, with whose firm his had numerous and extensive transactions. These were of such a nature that "accounts current," showing the balance between the parties, were periodically rendered. It so happened that Mr. K——, having occasion to call on other business, brought such an account with him, saying, as he handed it to Mr. B——: "It is a little before the time, but it may as well be settled now." A hurried glance showed Mr. B—— that the balance was 2993*l.* 10*s.* 11*d.* in favour of his firm. Most naturally he turned up the corresponding account in the ledger, seeing it was before him; and there having been no transaction since the account as it stood there was closed a few days previously, the balance of course must agree. To his astonishment it was 2930*l.* 10*s.* 11*d.* How could this be? He thought a moment, and began to mutter, "Just 63*l.* difference, and in their favour too; 63*l.* against cash in the 'trial,' that tallies. Herbert, come here, sir," he concluded, in a voice loud enough for every one in the office to hear. But Herbert heard it not. He had overheard Mr. K—— speaking of the account current, and knowing that detection was inevitable, he made a hasty exit from the counting-house, his countenance dark and gloomy, the big drops of sweat pouring from his forehead, and cursing in his heart his own egregious folly.

"He has gone out, sir," answered another young man.

"Well, compare that account with the ledger, and find out the error."

It was not difficult of discovery. About six weeks before, a sum of 606*l.* 13*s.* 3*d.* stood in the account as cash paid by Mr. K——'s firm, while in the ledger they had got credit for 669*l.* 13*s.* 3*d.* Uncommon generosity! Immediate reference was made to the cash book. The latter sum stood there also, and it was on the same page that the error of 63*l.* had been found. The entry was carefully examined, and a keen eye—for it took such—could detect an addition and an erasure. What these were our readers will easily conceive; and we need scarcely say, they were thus skilfully managed by Herbert. His plan was most ingenious. He had chosen an account, wherein, from the number and intricacy of the transactions, detection was not to be dreamt of; then, having attained his object, that of making Edney guilty of theft and getting his position, he could easily restore the original and correct sums, without any one knowing aught thereof. Thus he imagined; but he thought not of the eye of Providence. Short-sighted man!

Most joyfully did Mr. B—— hear the solution of the mystery. The son of his friend *was* there as he *had been*, and he was glad at heart. But what of Herbert? he never returned to his desk, nor has he since been seen in London. It may be that he sought a home in a foreign land; we need not at present inquire.

William Edney could not repress his emotion at the vindication of his character. He was "not guilty;" his honesty was proven. He could not reply to the kind words of Mr. B—— and his fellow clerks, but the parting advice of his father—

"Don't forget integrity and a good conscience"—rose to memory, and he inwardly thanked God that he had been enabled to act upon it. He still lives, following out a career of commercial integrity and prosperity—in harmony with such a commencement.

WILLIAM CAXTON.

THE fifteenth century formed an era in the history of letters, and it is to be reckoned among those manifold coincidences which occur under the government of God, that the revival of learning and the discovery of printing should have taken their rise at the same time. During the two preceding centuries, there had not been wanting striking indications of some mighty change. They formed a period of manifold preparations, and of no common developments. The germs of science and of truth were ever and anon bursting through the incrustations and heavy mould of ages. Invention followed invention, and discovery succeeded discovery. The chemical proportion and admixture of a few simple elements gave that singular product which we know by the name of gunpowder, and the knowledge of this single agent led to the most remarkable change in European warfare. The value of merely personal prowess fell to the lowest point, and in proportion as physical force was depreciated men began to seek distinction by mental activity and superiority. Intelligence started into fresher life, and society entered on a race of progressive light and knowledge. On the introduction of the magnetic needle, expeditions were formed and voyages were undertaken. Islands, coasts, and capes were discovered; new passages and mighty continents were found out. Though the immediate object was gold and a variety of wealth, yet we cannot fail to perceive how "the face of the whole habitable globe was laid open to the eye of the naturalist, and to the enterprise of the merchant. Geography, natural history, astronomy, mathematics, and other sciences, gained thereby a much more enlarged field of vision, and more appropriate destinations. Commerce, that had hitherto been limited almost entirely to the Mediterranean, became now extended to every part of the known world, and brought the most distant nations into contact with each other." Nor was this all. The ruling spirit and tone of the age proceeded mainly from the revival of the ancient literature and learning of the Greeks. On the siege and fall of Constantinople, the Grecian fugitives, by the rich and long-lost treasures of classical knowledge which they brought with them, created a new and brilliant era in letters and science—first in Italy, then in Germany, and lastly throughout the rest of Europe. The European nations turned their knowledge to the best practical account, by bringing it to bear on the general improvement and elevation of society. Schools were established, and education was everywhere encouraged. A new intellectual epoch began, and though we cannot speak of the change as perfect, it was yet the blossom which ripens into fruit, or resembled those throes of nature which precede some mighty birth.

It is to the art of printing that we owe that great organic change—the Protestant reformation.

Humanly speaking, this grand religious revolution could never have been effected, but for the facilities which the press afforded for the multiplication and the wider diffusion of those writings, in which the reformed doctrines were enumerated and set forth. These were circulated in such numbers, and with such rapidity, that a man might as well have attempted to arrest the stars in their course, or to have spoken back the flow of the tide, as to have checked the spread and progress of these writings. The popular mind was thus flooded with light and information. The spirit of inquiry was awakened. Man refused to be longer held in mental and moral thralldom. He rose, and cast his chain away. The design of Providence, in the establishment of the printing-press, was clearly seen in the productions of the press itself; either the whole Bible, or separate portions of it, were the first writings which were published; and just as these obtained a free and a wider circulation, did civilisation and improvement, science and literature, liberty and religion, all advance. The press opened a medium of communication between the nations, and a channel for the current and flow of knowledge to the ends of the earth. It converted the richest and deepest stores of the human mind into common property. It connected those who were geographically farthest removed the one from the other, and established in the world of letters a new and still closer brotherhood.

The rapidity with which this wondrous art spread, and the improvements which it received, may be inferred from the fact, that within fifty years there appeared works in almost all the learned languages. Before the middle of the sixteenth century, printing had reached such a degree of perfection as to enable our own country to compete with any other nation; and now her press is the admiration and the wonder of the whole civilized world.

It matters little whether this noble art be attributed to LAURENTIUS of Haarlem, or to JOHN FAUST, the wealthy goldsmith of Mayence, or to GUTTENBERG, his fellow-citizen, and a man of no vulgar enterprise. It is enough that the discovery was made, and that in the progress of events it ceased to be a secret. At first, the letters were cut in wooden blocks: for these tablets were substituted separate wooden types; these again gave place to metallic plates, and the whole of them to cast metal types. This last invention was reserved for PETER SCHÖFFER, the son-in-law of Faust, who succeeded in constructing a matrix or mould for each individual letter of the alphabet, and subsequently in forming an amalgam which rendered the type harder and more durable. He now joined his father-in-law in business. They concealed the discovery, and administered an oath of secrecy to all whom they employed, till by the sacking of Mentz, in 1462, their establishment was broken up, their servants dispersed, and the secret divulged. The first book printed with this new type was in 1459. The cast letters were all of one size, and the larger characters were cut in the metal. In all the types, the character employed was the old Gothic or German. The introduction of the Roman character is ascribed to Sweynheim and Pannutez, and the italic to the celebrated Italian, Aldo Manuzio, who established a printing office in

Venice in 1488, and to whom the literary world was then indebted for several valuable editions of the Greek and Latin classics. He obtained a patent for his discovery, the exclusive use of which he enjoyed for several years. With his death expired the glory of the Aldine press.

From this period, printing made rapid progress in most of the principal towns of Europe. Its introduction into England has been by almost universal consent ascribed to WILLIAM CAXTON, who was born in Kent, in 1410, and spent twenty-three years in the Netherlands, as an agent of the silk mercers' company, where he acquired his knowledge of this noble invention. After a period of the most intense application in making himself master of the art—after having overcome what to some other less ardent spirits would have proved insurmountable difficulties, and after having expended a considerable portion of his own little property in the preliminary working of this new and sublime power, he came to England, set up a press in 1471, in Westminster, under the patronage of Milling, who was then at the head of the abbey, and in 1474, or 1475, issued his first English work, entitled *THE BOOK OF THE CHESS*; and, though at the outset, his publications were few and far between—amounting to no more than sixty, in some seventeen or eighteen years—yet such was his effort to supply his fellow countrymen with the lessons of a wider intelligence and a purer morality, that he at once secured the support and patronage of the learned and the noble, of the man of letters and the ruler of nations.

It was after England had been torn asunder by the wars of the Roses, and the blood of her children had been shed with prodigal profusion, that Henry the Seventh ascended the throne. The character of his administration was such as tranquillized the nation, and raised himself in the esteem of all Europe. The peace which followed the civil wars was favourable to mental culture. Availing himself of this period of national tranquillity, Caxton devoted himself to the translation of foreign works, or to the obtaining of original compositions, by which he contributed most effectually to the literature of his country and the education of the people. And, though Henry was not himself a man of letters, still Caxton enjoyed his favour, and acted under his royal protection. His spirit was on fire in the pursuit of his object; and, until the snows of about eighty winters had whitened his locks, and the frosts of those winters had benumbed his energies, did he continue to employ all his faculties and all his resources in forwarding his sublime art. He finished his translation of *THE LIVES OF THE FATHERS* only on the day of his death, and went down to the grave as full of honour as of years. We are not ignorant of the fact, that it has been attempted to rob Caxton of the honour of first introducing the art of printing into his native country; but, after the most searching and sifting examination of the evidence on both sides, we are irresistibly led to the conclusion, that to him in good faith belongs the honour of having given to his country the knowledge of an invention which has impressed a distinctive character on all her subsequent history, and of having taught her how to employ the mightiest power for good which man had ever

evoked from mere inert matter. Whatever may be said in support of the claims of Corseilis, we cannot help thinking that the weight of authority and the voice of tradition are both in favour of Caxton; and, in saying this, we are but strewing another flower on that grave on which no Englishman can tread with light or giddy step.

Rapid and astonishing as were the improvements introduced into the metallic composition employed in the type-foundry, as also in the matrices or moulds in which the types were cast, the construction of the printing press was, in the first instance, a thing of no taste or elegance; and so it continued, with but few alterations, till the late Earl of Stanhope happily succeeded in constructing one entirely of iron, and, by a beautiful combination of levers, gave such motion to the screw, as to bring down the platten—the level surface that gives the impression—with increased rapidity and force, till it reached the type, when a very great power was obtained. This was a positive advance on all that had gone before. Other improvements followed, but nothing fully commensurate with the wants of this age of wondrous development—an age of steam, and locomotion, and telegraph—till the hand-press gave place to the automatic printing-machine. The multiplied facilities which our railways opened up for communication between one locality and another, and especially between the metropolis and the most distant hamlet of our land, demanded that every item of intelligence—whether political or commercial, whether affecting our own nation or other nations—should be supplied with the least possible delay. It would no longer suffice to throw off a public journal at the rate of two or three thousand copies per day. One single hour was too much to devote to such a limited result. The substitution of cylindrical machinery for the screw-press was first suggested by Nicholson, the editor of the *Philosophical Journal*, and its application in the form of working machines is due to König, a native of Saxony, who spent several years in England in bringing these machines to something approaching to perfection. On November 24th, 1814, the reader of *The Times* was assured that he held in his hand a paper printed by machinery, worked by the power of steam! This machinery produced eleven or twelve hundred impressions per hour. Subsequent improvements raised the impressions to eighteen hundred. It then occurred to König, that, by conveying it from one paper cylinder to another, he could, without removing the sheet, print it on both sides. This he effected in 1815; but the inventions of König were ere long superseded by the ingenious and combined efforts of Applegath and Cowper, who constructed a machine in which the types passed under four printing cylinders, fed with sheets of paper by four boys; and four thousand impressions on one side were obtained in one hour. Since then, Applegath has constructed a machine with eight cylinders, so that from eight to ten thousand impressions of *The Times* paper can be secured within sixty minutes of time; while, by the aid of locomotive power, this public journal is not only conveyed to the Land's End, or to John o'Groat's, within twenty-four hours from the time of publication, but is to be found the same day on the table of the Bourse in Paris, just as the

sun has passed the meridian.* This is an achievement of which neither Faust nor Caxton ever dreamed. They had no prophetic eye to see so far into the future. It was enough that they opened to their own age, and to all succeeding ages, that path of improvement which is now open to all to follow.

At the period of Caxton's death, there were five individuals, including Wynkyn de Worde, actively engaged in prosecuting this grand art; four of whom were foreigners, brought over, in all probability, by our countryman as assistants. And now there is scarcely a village of any note or consequence which has not its printing establishment; and not a city but has its literati, and its press teeming with publications of every class and character. Nor can we say that the art of printing is yet perfected. Many improvements yet doubtless remain.

The history of this useful art is inseparably connected with the progress of mankind. If the productions of the press have, more or less, taken the impress of the national mind, it is equally certain that the press itself has acted with a reflex power on the national intellect, quickening it into a higher activity, and breathing into it nobler aspirations. The press, with all its faults, has been one of the world's great teachers, and has given its lessons with a freshness, a fulness, and a force, not otherwise to be insured. It has often espoused the cause of the oppressed and the down-trodden. It has frowned upon ignorance, and encouraged education. It has been the advocate of good government and of social virtue. Nor is it among the least conspicuous signs of the times, that a press which professedly aimed at the corruption of the public morals would not be suffered to exist in our midst. The character of our literature, in spite of many defects, is such as may fairly challenge comparison with that of any other nation. Not only has it more vitality, variety, and power; but its tendencies are purer and more salutary. We are here speaking of the press, not in its isolation and separate working, but in its combined operation and influence. We can call to mind the time when some of our first and leading publications seemed to be in direct antagonism to the sublime disclosures of the Christian revelation; and though their tone is now lowered and altered, still we dare not conceal the fact, that there is a great deal of writing in every department of English literature, the tendency of which is to corrupt the deep fountain of human thought and feeling. If "intellect, embodied in written language, be an essential characteristic of literature," the play of that intellect may be like that of the lightning, which, on leaving its dark-bosomed cloud, comes forth only to scathe, to scorch, and to destroy; or like the arrow of death, which kills wherever it touches. But the press of England must not be confounded with this—its corrupter portion. The spread of education, and the fact that education is daily rising in its character and its quality, render certain a corresponding improvement and elevation in the public taste; and, henceforth, authors will be compelled to write in conformity with the spirit of their age.

* Our correspondent has been anticipated in these remarks by the paper entitled, "A Visit to the Times Office," in our last number.

Hints for Reflection.

THERE is more fatigue in laziness than in labour.

Those who suspect all are much to be suspected.

A cheap bargain often proves a dear purchase.

He is *little* worth whose promises are *nothing* worth.

Have a will of your own, but be not self-willed.

A good conscience and a good temper are intimately connected.

Bad words are soon learned by converse with those who use them, but not so soon unlearned.

If sin be harboured in the house, the curse waits at the door.

Those that throw away their virtue must not expect to save their reputation.

Industry and honesty are the surest and safest way both of rising and thriving.

It is better to lose a good coat than a good conscience.

The more we help others to bear their burdens the lighter our own will be.

Constancy is a virtue, but obstinacy is not

Rash anger is heart murder.

Those that would be kept from harm must keep out of harm's way.

It is better to be the credit of a mean post than the shame of a high one.

It is a very good lesson, though it is learnt with difficulty and rarely practised—to love those that hate us.

Works of piety and charity should, like water from a fountain, flow spontaneously from the gratitude and benevolence of a believing heart, and not require to be extorted with importunity like the toil and trouble of drawing water from a deep well. "God loveth a cheerful giver."

Depreciate no one—an atom has a shadow.

Self-denial is one of the first laws of Christ's kingdom.

The service of Christ abundantly repays all the sacrifices made for Him, even in this world.

The first fruit of true Christian resignation is exertion.

God, in his providence, sometimes seems harsh with those he loves, and speaks roughly to those for whom yet he has great mercy in store.

Integrity and uprightness will preserve us, and will clear themselves as the light of the morning.

God looks down upon those with an eye of favour who sincerely look up to him with an eye of faith.

Christ, as our way to heaven, is to be waited on; and heaven, as our rest in Christ, is to be waited for.

If the way to heaven be not far harder than the world imagine, then Christ and his apostles knew not the way, or else have deceived us; for they have told us, "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence," and that the gate is strait and the way narrow, and we must strive if we will enter. If ever soul obtain salvation in the world's common, careless, easy way, then I'll say, there is a nearer way found out than ever God in scripture hath revealed to the sons of men.—*Baxter*

A man is in the sight of God woe his habitual and cherished wishes are.

There is nothing right in the sight of God till the heart is right.

Some people sink all enjoyment of present comfort in the foreboding apprehension of future evils, which may never happen.

Faith is not to supersede prudence, nor is prudence to supersede faith.

Sin brought sorrow into the world: it was this that made the world a vale of tears, brought showers of trouble upon our heads, and opened springs of sorrows in our hearts, and so deluged the world.

The present state is the infancy of eternity.

Time bounds the hope of the unbelieving man.

It is true wisdom to understand the real value of life.

In the knowledge of God is the only true wisdom; in the service of God, the only true freedom; in the love of God, the only true felicity: and these are all so vast, that though they have their seed-time on earth, room for the harvest can be found only in heaven and eternity.

Life is a wasting thing: it is a candle that will burn out.

Man is a little world consisting of heaven and earth, soul and body.

It is a dangerous thing to treat with a temptation, which ought at first to be rejected with disdain and abhorrence.

Our brightest moments are frequently those which arise to us from the bosom of care and anxiety; the gems that sparkle upon the dark ground.

A right education is not merely the reading of many books, but the ability of making knowledge useful to ourselves and others. It is not simply to acquire influence over our fellow-creatures, but to make that influence subservient to moral excellence and piety.

He is happy whose circumstances suit his temper; but he is more fortunate who can suit his temper to any circumstances.

True humility consists in receiving praise, and rendering it to God untouched.

Sometimes we may compare the troubles which we have to undergo in the course of a year to a great bundle of fagots, too large for us to lift. But God does not require us to carry the whole burden at once; he mercifully unties the bundle, and gives us first one stick, which we are to carry to-day, and then another, which we are to carry to-morrow, and so on. This we might easily manage, if we would only take the burden appointed for us to carry each day; but we choose to increase our troubles by carrying yesterday's stick over again to-day, and adding to-morrow's burden to our load, before we are required to bear it.

I see in this world, said a good man, two heaps of human happiness and misery; now, if I can take but the smallest bit from one heap and add it to the other, I carry a point. If, as I go home, a child has dropped a halfpenny, and if by giving it another I can wipe away its tears, I feel I have done something. I should be glad to do greater things, but I will not neglect this.